

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay From Nelson in Pendle.

Figure in White in Chorley Fox and Goose public house (closed early twentieth century) Date and Time March 1887.

A landlord and two men discovered a figure in white in the kitchen. The figure made such a strange sound that the men allowed it to leave. The figure was later arrested, when it was revealed the ghost was a burglar who had tried to disguise himself as a paranormal entity.

In the small Lancashire town of Chorley, nestled among the rolling hills and quaint streets, there stood an old and storied establishment known as the Fox and Goose public house. For generations, it had been a gathering place for locals seeking solace in the warmth of its hearth and the camaraderie of fellow patrons. However, in the early twentieth century, the doors of the Fox and Goose had closed, leaving behind a legacy of memories and tales whispered through the years.

One such tale, a strange and haunting incident, took place in March of 1887 when the pub was still in its prime. The night was chilly, and a thick fog hung in the air, casting an eerie ambiance over the town. The Fox and Goose was filled with the laughter of patrons and the clinking of glasses as they sought refuge from the harsh elements outside.

Amidst the lively atmosphere, the landlord, a stout and no-nonsense man named Samuel Finch, received an unexpected visit. Two men, their faces pale and drawn, rushed into the pub with wild eyes and trembling hands. They appeared to be in a state of utter disbelief and distress.

"What's the matter, lads?" Samuel asked, his brow furrowing with concern.

One of the men stammered, "Samuel, you won't believe what we've seen in your kitchen."

Samuel exchanged a puzzled glance with the patrons who had gathered to listen. Without hesitation, he led the two men to the kitchen at the back of the pub, its walls adorned with faded oil paintings and shelves filled with jars of pickles and preserves.

As they entered the kitchen, their breaths caught in their throats. There, bathed in an eerie, ghostly glow, stood a figure dressed entirely in white. It was hunched over a wooden table, its movements slow and deliberate. A strange, guttural sound emanated from the figure, sending shivers down their spines.

Samuel's heart pounded in his chest as he asked, "Who are you? What are you doing here?"

The figure turned its head, revealing a face obscured by a white hood. It continued making its eerie, otherworldly sounds, which only grew more unsettling with each passing moment.

The two men who had stumbled upon this chilling scene felt a growing sense of dread, and their courage wavered. With trembling voices, they urged Samuel to take action, to banish this spectral intruder from his kitchen.

But as they drew nearer, something extraordinary happened. The figure in white suddenly dropped to the floor, writhing and contorting, its eerie sounds now resembling pained cries. It was as if the ghostly facade had crumbled, revealing a living, breathing person beneath.

Samuel and the two men approached cautiously, and to their astonishment, they recognized the man beneath the hood. It was none other than Charles Milligan, a known troublemaker in Chorley.

"Charles, what madness is this?" Samuel demanded, his anger now replacing his initial fear.

Charles, his face pale and guilty, finally spoke, "I was trying to rob you, Samuel. I thought if I dressed as a ghost, I could slip in unnoticed. But when you and these men came in, I had to keep up the act."

Realization dawned on Samuel and the others. Charles had attempted to disguise himself as a paranormal entity to commit a burglary, but his plan had backfired spectacularly.

The constables were called, and Charles Milligan was arrested for his audacious attempt at

deception. The town of Chorley would remember the bizarre night at the Fox and Goose for years to come, not as a ghostly encounter, but as a tale of a burglar whose greed led him to don the most unlikely of disguises – that of a figure in white.

By Donald Jay